

ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF TURKEY



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Foreign Section Editors :

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EDITORIAL

The first meeting of the Foreign Section was held in London on December 6th. Twenty members and observers attended and the minutes are being circulated with this Bulletin.

In the discussion following the adoption of the Society's Constitution and election of officers we were pleased to be able to announce that a letter had been received from Tansu Gulpinar informing the meeting that the National Section was to hold its first convention in Ankara on December 13th:

"We will have our first meeting of our Ornithological Society on December 13th. Candidates of the National Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation will also be chosen at the same meeting. Many authorities from Government Offices, Universities and hunting clubs have been invited to the meeting. We hope we will get a good interest and number of members will increase."

We wish our Turkish colleagues every success with their two new Societies and hope to report fully on their developments in the next Bulletin.

SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 1969

Members are reminded that subscriptions for 1969 are due now and we would be very grateful for an early remittance. At the end of 1968 the membership of the Foreign Section stood at 75 and we hope all those who joined during the year and helped in the launching of

the Society will continue their support in 1969.

Subscriptions should be sent to J.P. Knowles, Hon. Treasurer and Membership Secretary, O.S.T., c/o R.S.P.B., The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire.

News from Ankara - ALAN VITTERY

After the long, dry summer, the Anatolian Plateau is less hospitable to migrating birds than in the Spring, when there are extensive tracts of temporary wetland. Thus the Autumn passage tends to be somewhat less spectacular and the late Autumn further suffers from the fact that the summer visitors move south rather early, presumably because of the altitude, and the winter arrivals are late because of the relatively southerly latitude. At Mogan Golu, a few miles to the south of Ankara, the first week of October witnessed a small passage of Red-footed Falcons (*Falco vespertinus*) and the departure of Little Egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Purple Heron (*Ardea purpurea*) and Tawny Pipit (*Anthus campestris*). Bluethroats (*Cyanosylvia svecica*) reached a peak of 7 there in the second week during which the first Reed Buntings (*Emberiza schoeniclus*), Bearded Reedlings (*Panurus biarmicus*) and Water Pipits (*Anthus spinoletta*) returned. A regular census of partially wooded valley in the suburbs of Ankara (Cankaya) produced a few Goldcrests (*Regulus regulus*) and Firecrests (*Regulus ignicapillus*) in mid-October and 3 Subalpine Warblers (*Sylvia cantillans*) and an early Fieldfare (*Turdus pilaris*) on 25th. By the end of the month White-fronted Geese (*Anser albifrons*) were back in force and a small flock was accompanied by a Red-breasted Goose (*Branta ruficollis*) at Balikdama, a marsh on the Sakarya River to the west of Ankara. The same period saw the arrival of a few Merlins (*Falco columbarius*), 4 Golden Plovers (*Pluvialis apricaria*), Redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) and Siskins (*Carduelis spinus*) as well as the temporary reappearance of Glossy Ibis (*Plegadis falcinellus*), Black-bellied Sandgrouse (*Pterocles orientalis*), Roller (*Coracias garrulus*), Sand Martin (*Riparia riparia*) and Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*). Tuz Golu, to the south of Ankara, provided its usual spectacle of thousands of Cranes (*Grus grus*), Flamingos (*Phoenicopterus ruber*) and Avocets (*Recurvirostra avosetta*), plus Little Stints (*Calidris minutus*) and a late Marsh Sandpiper (*Tringa stagnatilis*).

Redstarts (*Phoenicurus phoenicurus*) and Blackcaps (*Sylvia atricapilla*) hung on in small numbers into early November when the last Lesser Spotted Eagle (*Aquila pomarina*) and Little Bittern (*Ixobrychus minutus*) were recorded at Mogan Golu. By the second week a considerable southerly movement of Grey Wagtails (*Motacilla cinerea*), Chaffinches (*Fringilla coelebs*), Linnets (*Acantha cannabina*), Yellowhammers (*Emberiza citrinella*) and Greenfinches (*Carduelis chloris*) was under way. Blackbirds (*Turdus merula*) and Rock Buntings (*Emberiza cia*) had returned to the valley at Cankaya and a single Hawfinch (*Coccothraustes coccothraustes*) appeared there on 11th. The last Red-throated Pipit (*Anthus cervinus*) occurred on 17th. and on the following weekend new arrivals included a Jack Snipe (*Lymnocyrtus minima*), a duck Smew (*Mergus albellus*) and a Grey Plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*).



Autumn 1968 at the Bosphorus

The Bosphorus must hold a fascination for all who have an interest in birds of prey and storks. During the autumn, from across Eastern Europe come White and Black Storks (*Ciconia ciconia*, *C. nigra*), buzzards (*Buteo buteo*, *Pernis apivorus*), eagles (mostly *Aquila* etc.) and hawks (*Accipiter*) in their thousands, over the mosques and minarets of Istanbul, over the Bosphorus and on eastwards into Anatolia.

This year observations were made at the Camlica Hills during the last parts of August and September. The periods in which certain species moved were found to be more or less consistent with the previous two autumns, and the majority of *Ciconia ciconia* (White Stork), *Pernis apivorus* (Honey Buzzard) and *Milvus migrans* (Black Kite) passed in August, and *Ciconia nigra* (Black Stork), *Buteo buteo* (Buzzard), *Aquila pomarina* (Lesser Spotted Eagle) and *Circus gallicus* (Short-toed Eagle) in the latter half of September. The above mentioned species form the bulk of the movements.

In seven days watching between August 23rd - 31st totals of 61,850 *C. ciconia*, 10,215 *P. apivorus* and 607 *Milvus migrans* were counted. The count of *Pernis apivorus* includes the huge total of 6,655 on 29th, and the grand total for this species is more than that of 1966 when watching was carried out for the whole autumn.

In the 10 day period September 19th - 28th little movement was recorded during the first seven, apart from 910. A *pomarina* on 20th, and 1,500 *C. nigra* on 22nd. However, on 26th, 27th 28th some excellent movements were seen, and the birds were concentrated in "streams" passing often low over the large hill (Buyuk Camlica), thus affording very good views. The main totals for those three days were 1,625 *C. nigra*, 8,062 *B. buteo*, 4,880 *A. pomarina* and 544 *C. gallicus*.

Many other soaring birds were also recorded, in very much smaller numbers, during the two periods, including *Pelecanus onocrotalus* (White Pelican), *Pandion haliaetus* (Osprey), *Milvus milvus* (Red Kite), *Hieraaetus pennatus* (Booted Eagle), *Aquila heliaca* (Imperial Eagle), *Circus* sp. (Harriers), *Gyps fulvus* (Griffon Vulture), *Neophrons percnopterus* (Egyptian Vulture), several species of *Falconidae* (Falcons) and *Grus grus* (Crane). Less than 50 *Accipiter brevipes* (Levant Sparrowhawk), which is the main *Accipiter* migrating at the Bosphorus, were seen, undoubtedly because its peak passage period is the first half of September, when no observations were made this year.

Members will be interested to learn that the B.B.C. filmed the Stork migration over the Bosphorus in the autumn of 1968 and this forms the climax of a 50 minute film entitled FABULOUS STORKS which is to be shown on B.B.C. 2 at 8.15 p.m. on 12th January 1969.

Winter Wildfowl Counts

Several Turks together with at least seven members of the Foreign Section of the Society will be taking part in the International Wildfowl Census between 4th - 19th January. Careful co-ordination of the observers on the part of the organiser, William Wilkinson, should mean that all the important wildfowl wintering haunts will be covered. A report on the counts will appear in the next Bulletin.

Records for 1968

If you visited Turkey during 1968 and have unpublished records the Society would very much like a copy of them to include in the annual report.

So far we have received seven sets of observations for 1968 and so that an early start can be made on preparing the report, observers are requested to send in their records not later than the end of March.

For presentation of data observers are referred to Bulletin No. 1 (Sept. 1968). For those who have not seen this copies can still be obtained from the Hon. Treasurer.

The report for 1966-67 is now nearing completion but has been held up because of several

late sets of observations and it was not until the end of November that work could start in earnest on writing up the systematic list. Well over 30 observers have contributed.

Bulletin Illustrations

The originals of the line drawings which Ian Willis has prepared for this issue are being offered for sale at £2 for the set of three. Mr. Willis has kindly agreed that the proceeds will go to the Society's funds and the illustrations will be offered to the first person contacting the Editors.

The illustrations are:

Page 1. Anser albifrons (White-fronted Geese) and Anser ruficollis (Red-breasted Geese) - two of the species that winter in Turkey.

Page 2. Migrant geese from the north - a winter scene in Turkey.

Page 4. Early autumn at Istanbul - migrating Black Kites (Milvus migrans) over one of the famous mosques.



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